Stacked History

BITING INTO TAMPA'S CUBAN SANDWICH

SWEET HAM FROM SPAIN, mojo-marinated pork from Cuba, Genoa salami from Italy, Swiss cheese and dill pickles from central European and Jewish immigrants, layered inside crunchy bread and then pressed and toasted, make what is called a Cuban, but it's more than just a sandwich. "These ingredients represent the heritage and diversity of Tampa," says Yvonne Yolie Capin, a city council member who, last April, officially declared the Cuban the Florida city's signature sandwich. The Cuban's birthplace is Ybor City, a neighborhood northeast of downtown once dominated by a thriving cigar industry. Cuban immigrants arrived in the early 1900s to work in the factories, bringing with them their favorite midday snack—bread stuffed with sliced meat called a *mixto*. Local grocers and cafés renamed and sold the lunchtime staple. Family-owned **Columbia Restaurant** makes Cubans from a 1915 recipe. Food truck newcomer and third-generation Tampan Michelle Faedo takes her roots on the road with **Michelle Faedo's On the Go,** a mobile kitchen creating Cubans so delicious they recently won "Best Traditional Cuban" in a statewide contest. She credits quality ingredients, including the essential Cuban bread from **La Segunda Central Bakery,** where she recalls shopping with her grandmother. "I serve the food I ate when I was young; it's authentic and represents my city." —KIMBERLEY LOVATO

Florida's Columbia Restaurant has served Cuban sandwiches for nearly a century.

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